



**Washington State Public Health Laboratory
Risk and Safety Assessment
Stakeholder Group Meeting Report
August 18, 2008**

Overview

This was the third meeting of the Public Health Laboratories' (PHL) Stakeholder Group. The group has been recruited by the PHL to assist with a risk and safety assessment. The stakeholder group participated in the selection of a consultant to perform that assessment, and will provide advice to the PHL throughout the assessment process. In addition, the group will provide recommendations to the Department of Health on the best way to ensure successful communication, over the long-term, with the Shoreline community.

This meeting served as a "kick-off" introductory session between the stakeholder group and the Kleinfelder consulting team, which is conducting the risk assessment.

Attendees

Stakeholder Group Members

Ray Allshouse, *City of Shoreline*
Kent Baxter, *King County Sheriffs Office*
Bill Bear, *Briarcrest Neighborhood Association*
Jeff Flesner, *Fircrest School*
Jim Hardman, *Friends of Fircrest*
Scott Keeny, *Shoreline Fire Department*
Gail Marsh, *City of Shoreline*
Dick Nicholson, *Ridgecrest Neighborhood Association*
Jan Stewart, *Public-at- Large*

Staff

Lain Knowles, *Public Health Laboratory, Assistant Director*
Jim Robertson, *Chief Administrator for Epidemiology, Department of Health*
Scott Dwyer, *Kleinfelder Consultant Team*
Jonathan Richmond, *Kleinfelder Consultant Team*
Margaret Norton-Arnold, *Facilitator*
Amanda Sparr, *Administrative Assistant*

Introduction and Overview

Margaret opened the meeting and introduced the group to Scott Dwyer and Jonathan Richmond of the Kleinfelder Team. Members of the group also introduced themselves and shared information about the groups they represent.

Members shared information about a number of upcoming community events, including:

- A party to celebrate Paramount Park on Sunday, September 7 from 1 to 5 p.m.
- A meeting for the City of Shoreline's Southeast Subarea Planning Committee on Tuesday, August 19.
- An Emergency Management Council meeting on September 5 – possible to hold it at the Laboratory and get an update on the risk assessment?
- A demonstration on how to prevent elderly people from falling in their homes on September 27 at Pavilion Park – hosted by the Shoreline Fire Department and Senior Center.

Risk Assessment Timeline

Margaret provided a handout of the project timeline. The stakeholder advisory group will meet with the Kleinfelder team on September 26 for a mid-point review. A draft report will be provided to the group by October 17, and a stakeholder group meeting to discuss and review that draft with the consultant team will be held on October 24.

The draft report will also be posted on the PHL website on October 17 for any community members who wish to review it. A public meeting concerning the risk assessment will be held on November 6.

The process will be iterative; Scott strongly encouraged group members to contact him directly with any questions or concerns at any time over the next several months. Lain asked that members cc everyone on any emails they might send to Jonathan or Scott, so that everyone can be “kept in the loop.”

Kleinfelder Presentation

Scott Dwyer introduced the project team, and presented an outline of the project organization and key deliverables, schedule, and approach. A copy of Scott's powerpoint presentation can be found on the PHL website at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/PHL/RiskSafetyAssm/pdf/Kleinfelderslides-080818.pdf>

Scott Dwyer, Jonathan Richmond, and Igor Linkov are the primary members of the project team, with Scott serving as project manager. His primary project goals are:

- Address the concerns of all stakeholders in language that can be understood by all.
- Meet the established standards of the scientific community -- achieving full scientific and technical credibility.

Group Member Comments and Questions

After the presentation, group members asked questions and shared their comments:

One issue revolved around employee hiring and retention, with a concern expressed regarding employee mental health and stability. Particularly in light of the recent news regarding the scientist who had been involved with anthrax, group members were concerned that the same situation could potentially exist at the PHL. They wanted to make certain the Kleinfelder team would be addressing this issue.

A question was raised about the difference between a risk assessment and a vulnerability analysis. Scott offered clarification for the term “vulnerability”. He stated that a vulnerability analysis in the context of the risk and safety assessment is focused on infrastructure vulnerabilities and is based on identified threats and countermeasures. In a health risk assessment, the term “sensitive subpopulations,” which embodies the concerns of the stakeholders, could generally be defined as individuals who are more vulnerable to the health effects of chemicals or biological agents than the general healthy population. He offered that examples of *sensitive subpopulations* include children, the elderly, and the infirm.

Stakeholder group members reiterated that there is a highly vulnerable population living at nearby Fircrest School, and the risk assessment does need to fully address their vulnerability in an emergency situation. They want the consultant team to fully evaluate low-probability/high risk events, and what the impacts could be on the Fircrest School, other schools or public facilities in the area, and on the surrounding community. Scott assured the group that the sensitive subpopulations of concern will be addressed through Kleinfelder’s risk assessment.

In response to another question, Jonathan Richmond said, while he is located in North Carolina, he does not anticipate there will be any problems associated with the level of travel needed for his participation in the risk assessment.

Group members also wanted to make certain that the proposed laboratory expansion project will be evaluated in the risk assessment. Jim Robertson responded that Kleinfelder will be provided with 95%-complete design drawings, and will work off those drawings for the assessment.

A master plan for the Department of Health property within the Fircrest Campus will also be getting underway this fall. Although the timing of that project will be later than the risk assessment, Jim reiterated that any and all information about that master planning process will be shared with Kleinfelder.

The concern was noted that the master plan could be viewed as being “fluid and incomplete”, and that the resulting risk assessment might not then be comprehensive enough to include these future plans. Jim and Scott responded that the risk assessment should not be viewed as something that “lands with a thud” on December 1. There is

likely to be follow-up work required, and additional assessments may be ongoing. New information generated about the master plan will be included in this continuing work.

In response to other questions, Scott said that his team will be looking carefully at the vulnerability of the Laboratory to earthquakes and other natural disasters.

A question was raised about the retention of Laboratory records, and this will also be reviewed as part of the risk assessment.

Another comment related to Laboratory security; members wanted to make sure that preventative security was in place, and also requested the risk assessment include an evaluation of the security system standards related to BSL- 3 access, with a verification that the Laboratory is meeting those standards.

The group wanted reassurances that the Kleinfelder team could be objective in its reporting. Jonathan assured the group that he will be reporting exactly what he finds, and relayed an anecdote about a recent project in which he had inspected – and flunked – three laboratories on behalf of the Centers for Disease Control. He and other members of the team will “go by the book” and conduct a rigorous evaluation of the Public Health Laboratory. He referred group members to the American Biological Safety Association website (www.absa.org), which includes a statement of ethics for his profession.

In response to another question, Jonathan and Scott said they will provide the group with a list of all of the agents tested at the Laboratory. All testing procedures, “from cradle to grave” will also be evaluated through the risk assessment. .

Scott also verified that he had also received the list of questions previously generated by the stakeholder group.

Public Comment

Chris Eggen, Shoreline City Council, said he wanted to make certain the risk assessment would focus on any potential impacts to the community at large.

Bill Anderson, Friends of Fircrest, asked if Scott and Jonathan would honestly share their opinions about the Public Health Laboratory. Jonathan responded that, absolutely, he will ensure that the results of the assessment are scientifically objective and sound. Through the recommendations, he will identify any and all areas that need improvement, and he will not hesitate to share his honest opinions in this regard.

10 Year Capital Budget Plan

In response to questions raised at a previous stakeholder group meeting, Jim Robertson described the capital budgeting process, including the relationship between the Department of Health, the Governor’s office, and the Washington State Legislature. He noted that any potential projects must be identified a significant number of years in advance of their actual construction, with these projects revisited in every budget cycle. He also pointed out that the remote receiving facility, which had been included in an

earlier budget document, was no longer included in the proposed budget that will be provided to the Governor on August 22. Jim further noted that the risk assessment may identify needed improvements in both operations and capital facilities, and that the Department will also submit these requests through the State Legislature.

A question was asked about federal funding, and whether a federal grant would supplant items that might normally be included in the state capital budget. Jim and Lain responded that the federal government does not provide funding for the construction of capital projects, but only for programmatic functions. Furthermore, anything that is constructed at the Laboratory must first be reviewed and approved by the State Legislature.

Next Steps

The next meeting of the stakeholder group will be Friday, September 26th, from 3:00-6:00 p.m. This will be the mid-point meeting with the consultant team.

The draft report from Kleinfelder will be released on October 17 to the stakeholder group, and will also be posted on the PHL website at that time.

The stakeholder group will meet to review and discuss the draft report on Friday, October 24, from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

The Public Health Laboratory will host a public open house on Thursday, November 6 to present information about the risk assessment to the Shoreline community.